

i 1876 I

#9

W. R. 7th. L. Watson

An Inaugural
Essay

On Measles.

Paper No. 1

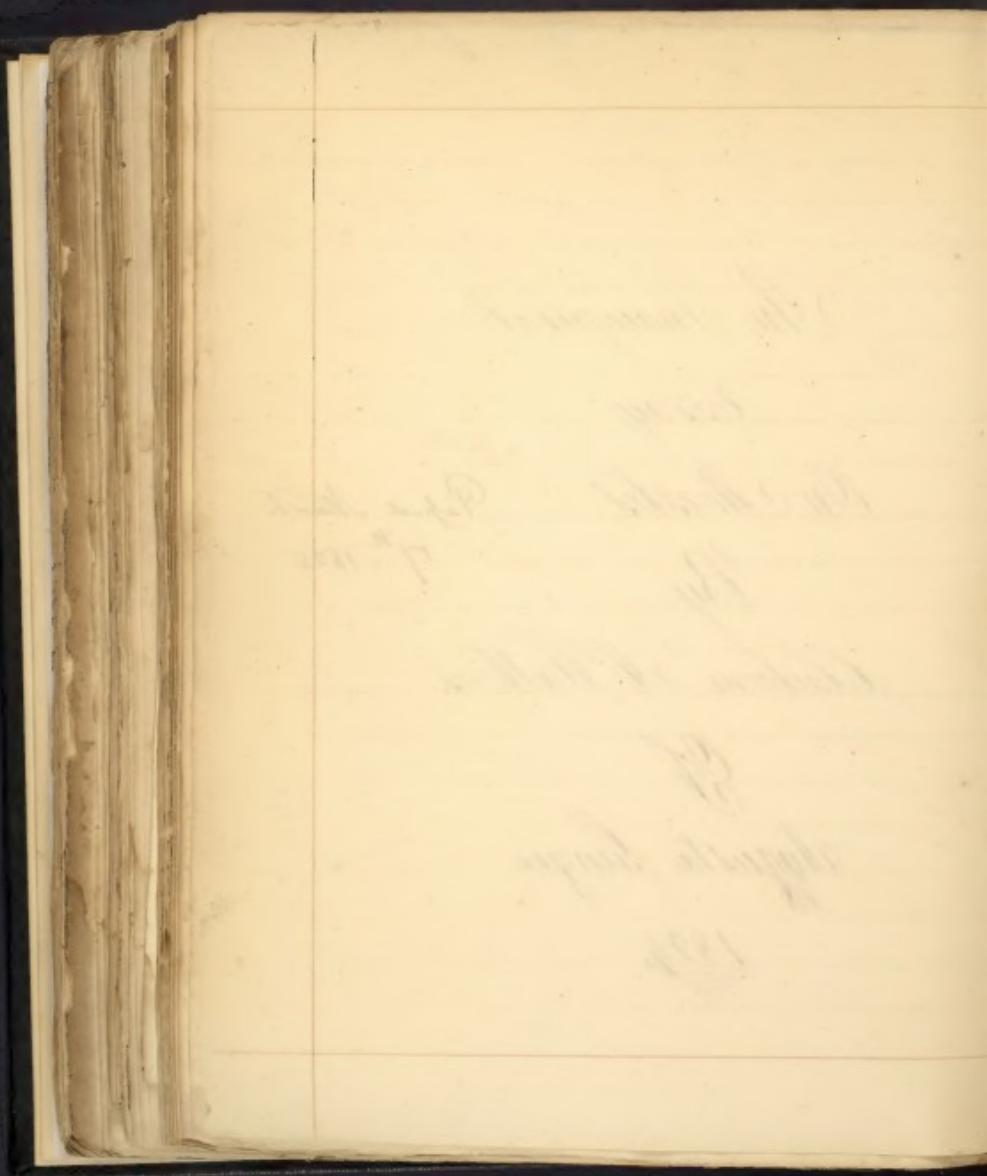
By

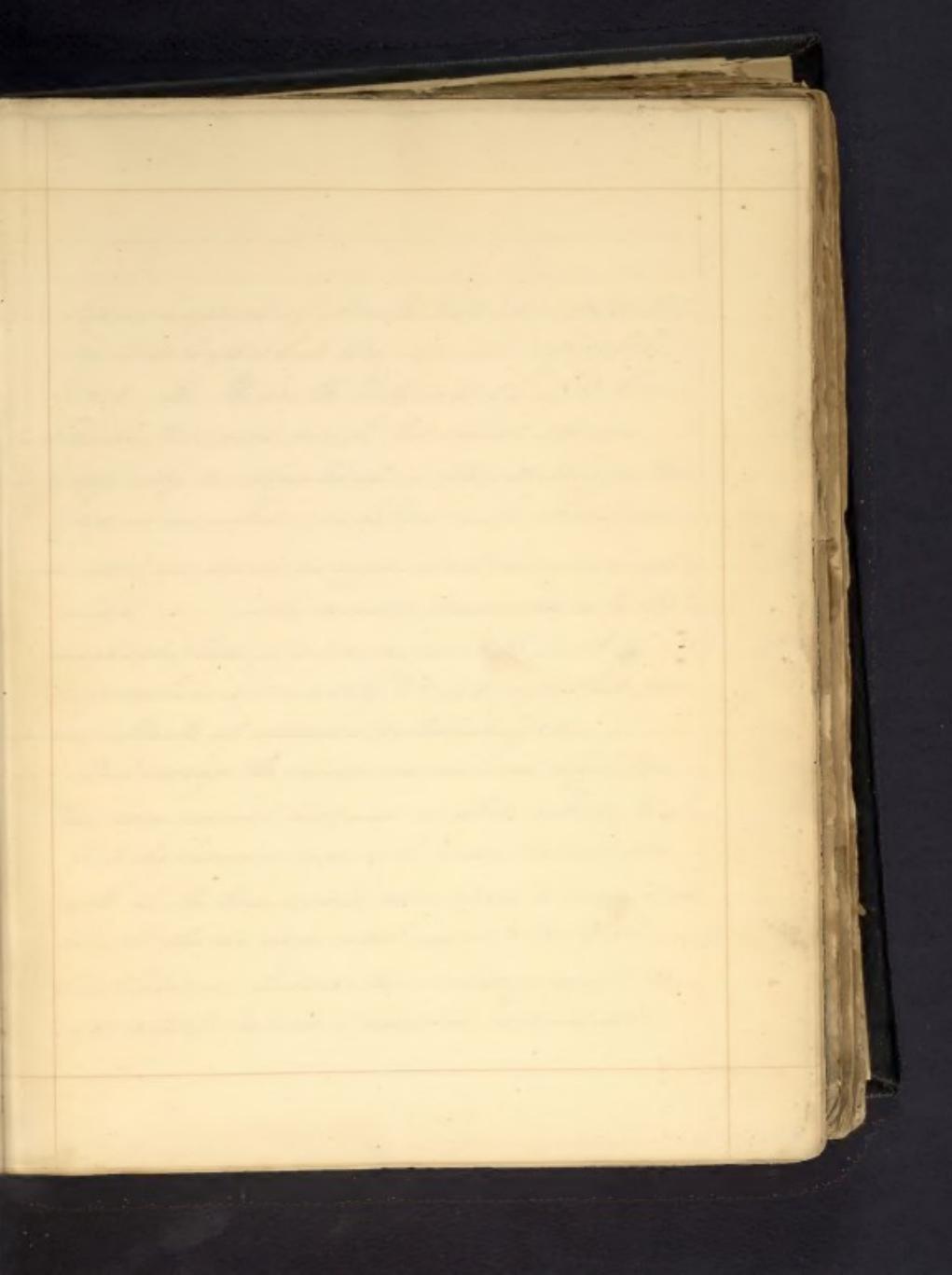
17th. 1825

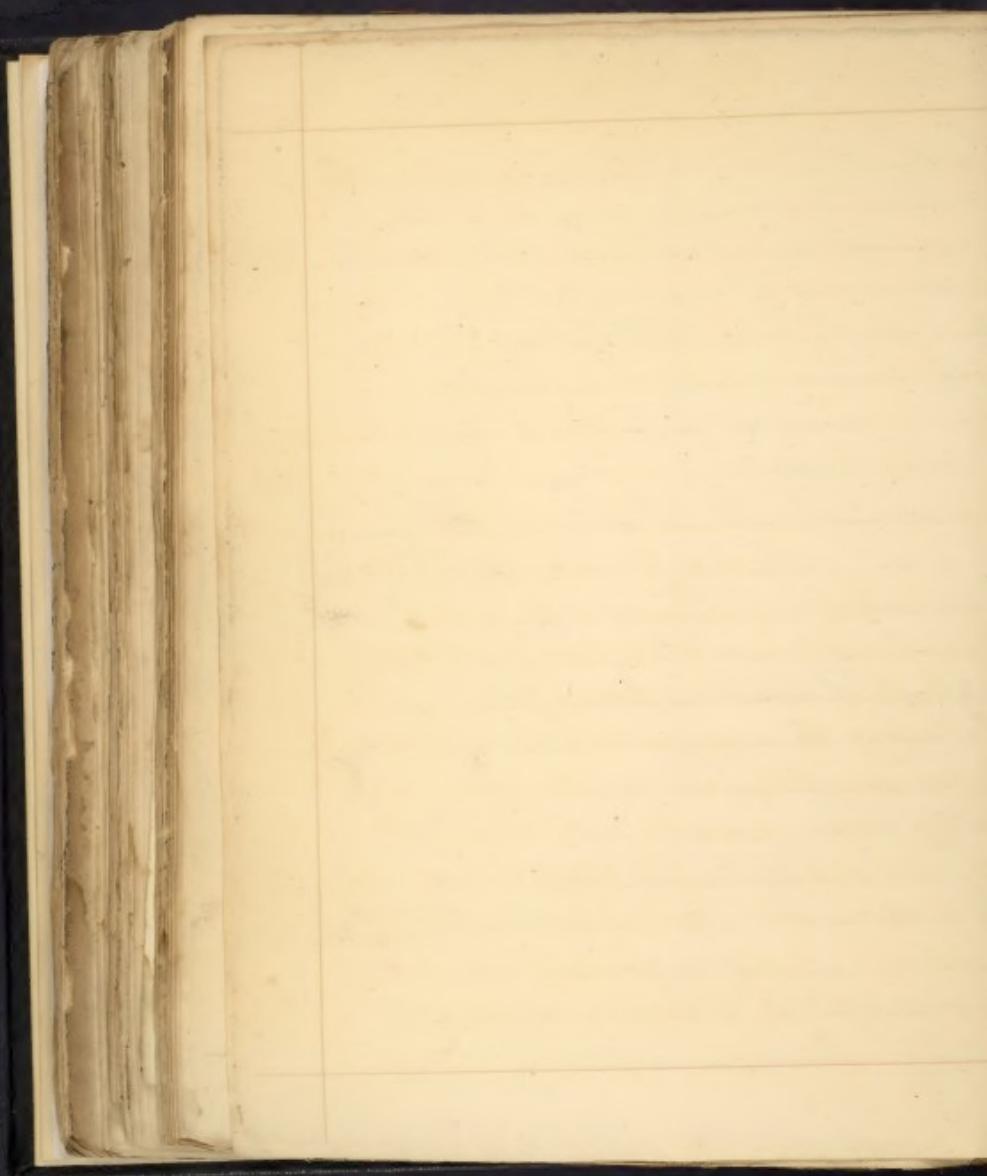
Clarendon St. Watkins.

Of
Augusta Georgia.

1824





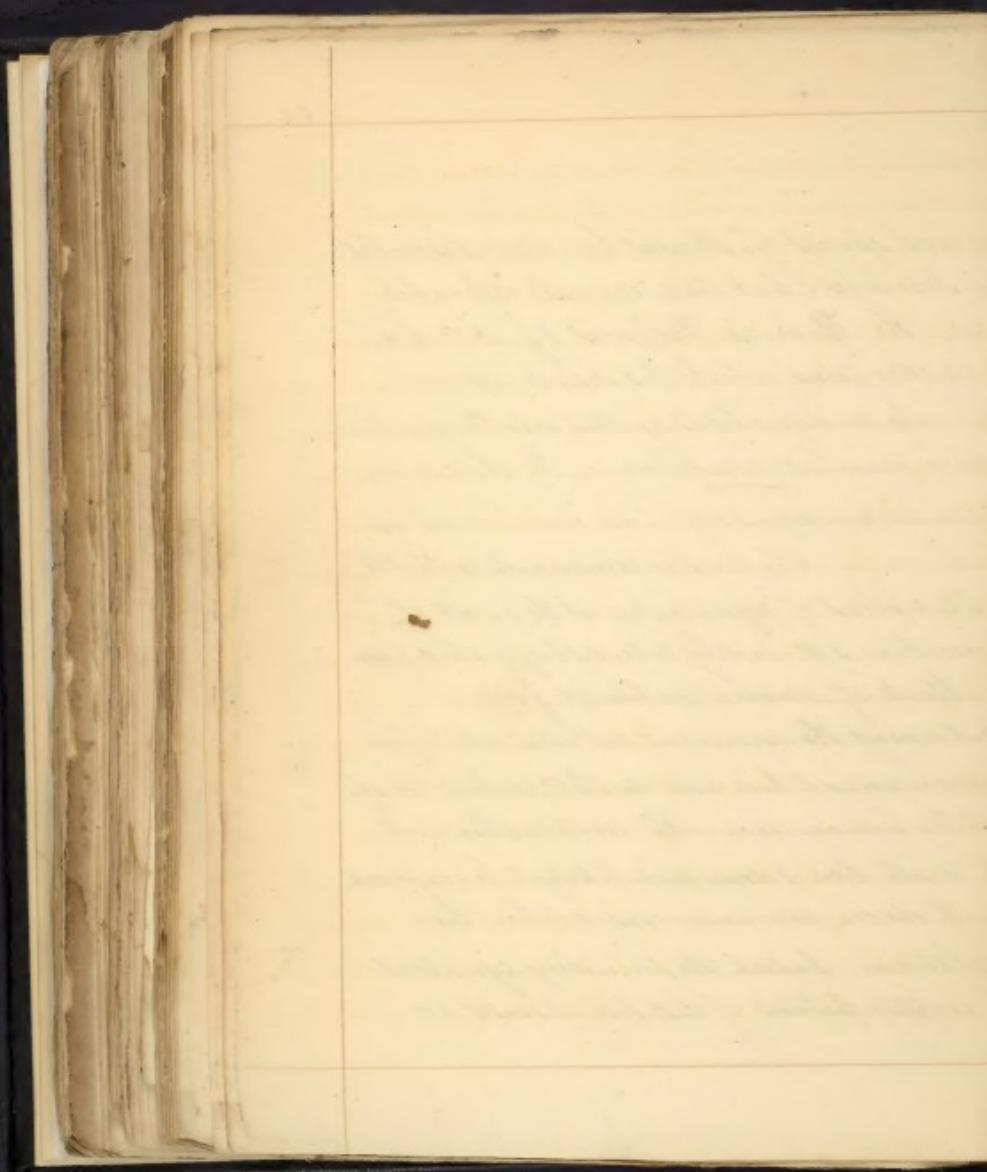


1

Several species of Measles have been described by Astrologists, but they are all inferior to one - the Rubrola Vulgaris of Dr. CulLEN; the other forms which this disease assumes being only modifications of that, resulting either from a peculiar condition of the atmosphere, or from an idiosyncrasy of the Individual affected.

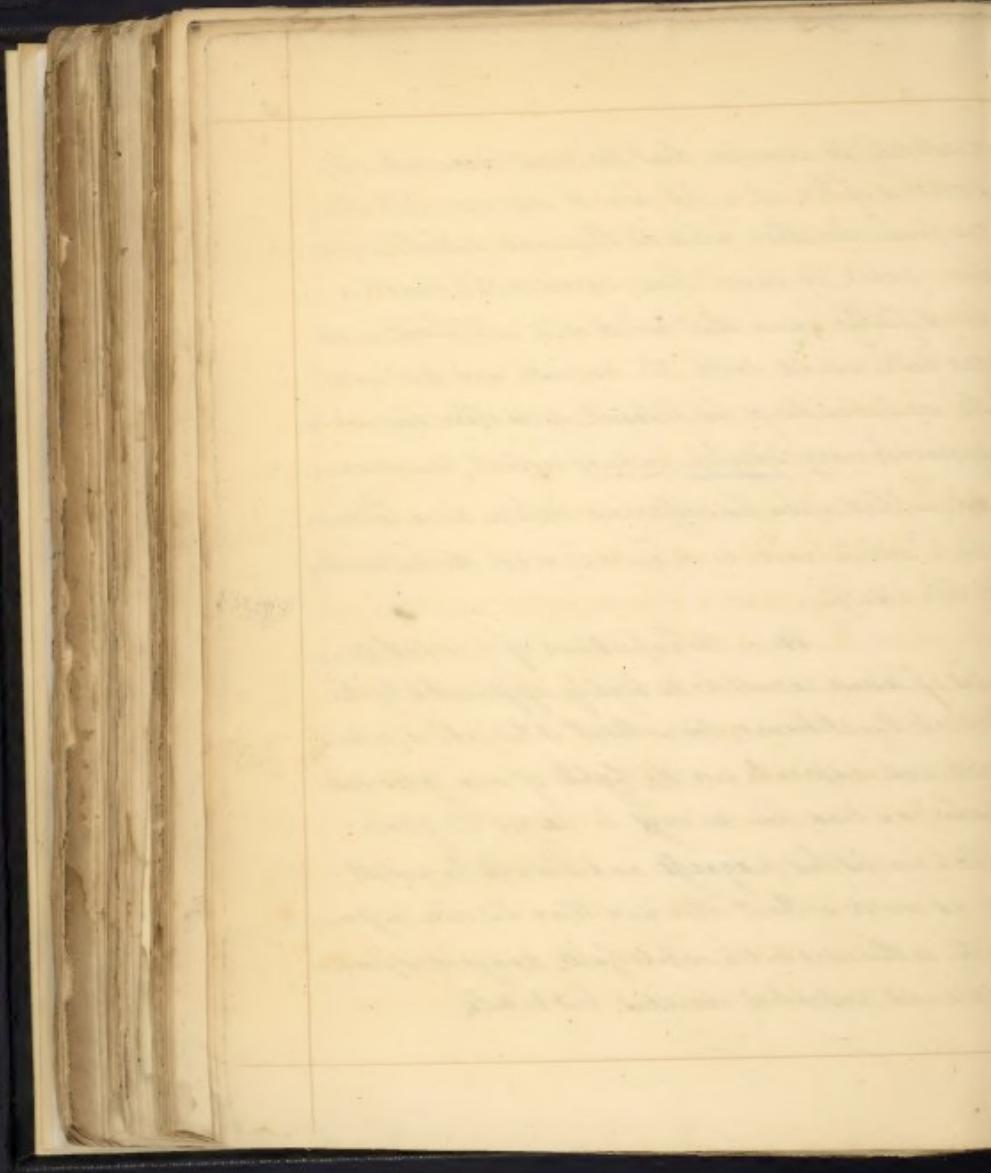
The measles commences with the usual symptoms of pyrexia; nor at the period of its formation is it readily to be distinguished from an attack of common continued febrile

But among the numerous maladies, which from time immemorial have, and do still continue to afflict the human race with confection and with death, there is none more likely to be confounded with the one now under consideration than Scarletina. Indeed the precursory symptoms and eruptive features of both two diseases are



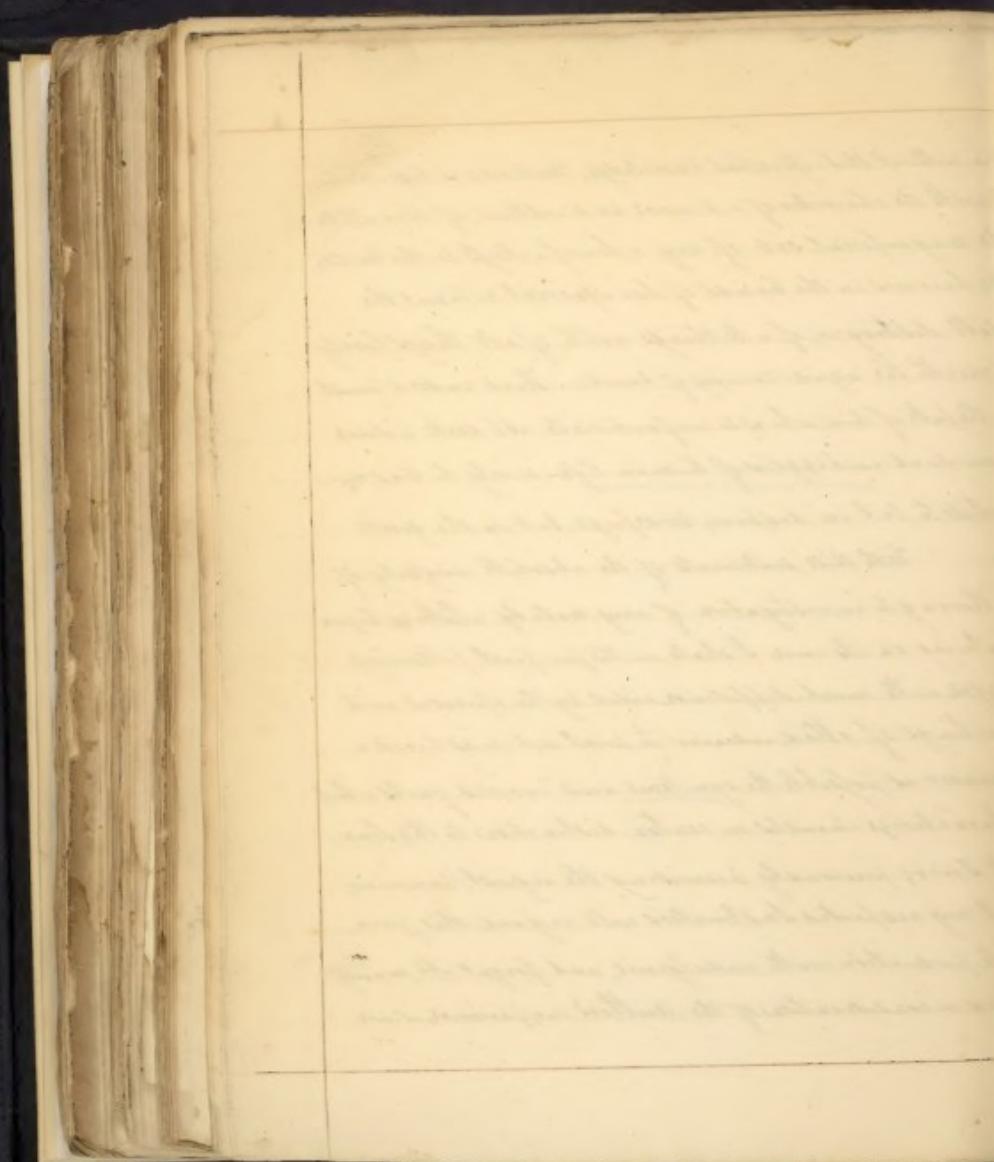
occasionally so similar that the most accurate observer is often at a loss how to discriminate the one from the other, while the Physician, destitute of a law guide to direct him, wavering in his practice, being fully aware that, while cold abstraction, in the one case, would sooth the anguish and diminish the irritability of his Patient; in the other, they would aggravate every symptom, induce violent pneumonia, and inflict upon his suffering victim, a calamity which could never be repaired, even the destruction of life itself.

Hence, the importance of a correct Diagnosis of disease cannot be too highly appreciated by the Medical Practitioner, for without this path is perhaps dark and desolate, nor the lights of our glorious Science can lead him no ~~right~~ to dispel the gloom which ~~worries~~ his progress and should he perdition in his course without other aid than his own ingenuity, he theorizes but to insults fallen, dangerous principles, and prescribes remedies, but to kill.



Yea, without this spiritual knowledge, Medicine is degraded beneath the character of a science, and instead of being, like the magnificent orb of day, a benefit to the world, she becomes in the hands of her ignorant votaries the fell destroyer of all things noble, of all thought lovely beneath the azure canopy of heaven. Hard indeed must be the fate of him who is so unfortunate as to seek advice from such embigglers of human life - surely, he has no antidote but in despair, no refuge, but in the grave.

With this statement of the absolute necessity of a thorough investigation of any malady whatever before entering on its cure, I shall in the few first following pages, with much diffidence, aided by the opinions and writings of others, endeavor to point out in as lucid a manner as possible the symptoms and various gouts which characterize measles in contra distinction to the scarlet fever; previously promising the reader however, that my respected Instructor will regard that juvenile production with indulgence, and forget its many errors in consideration of the author's impetuosity. Since



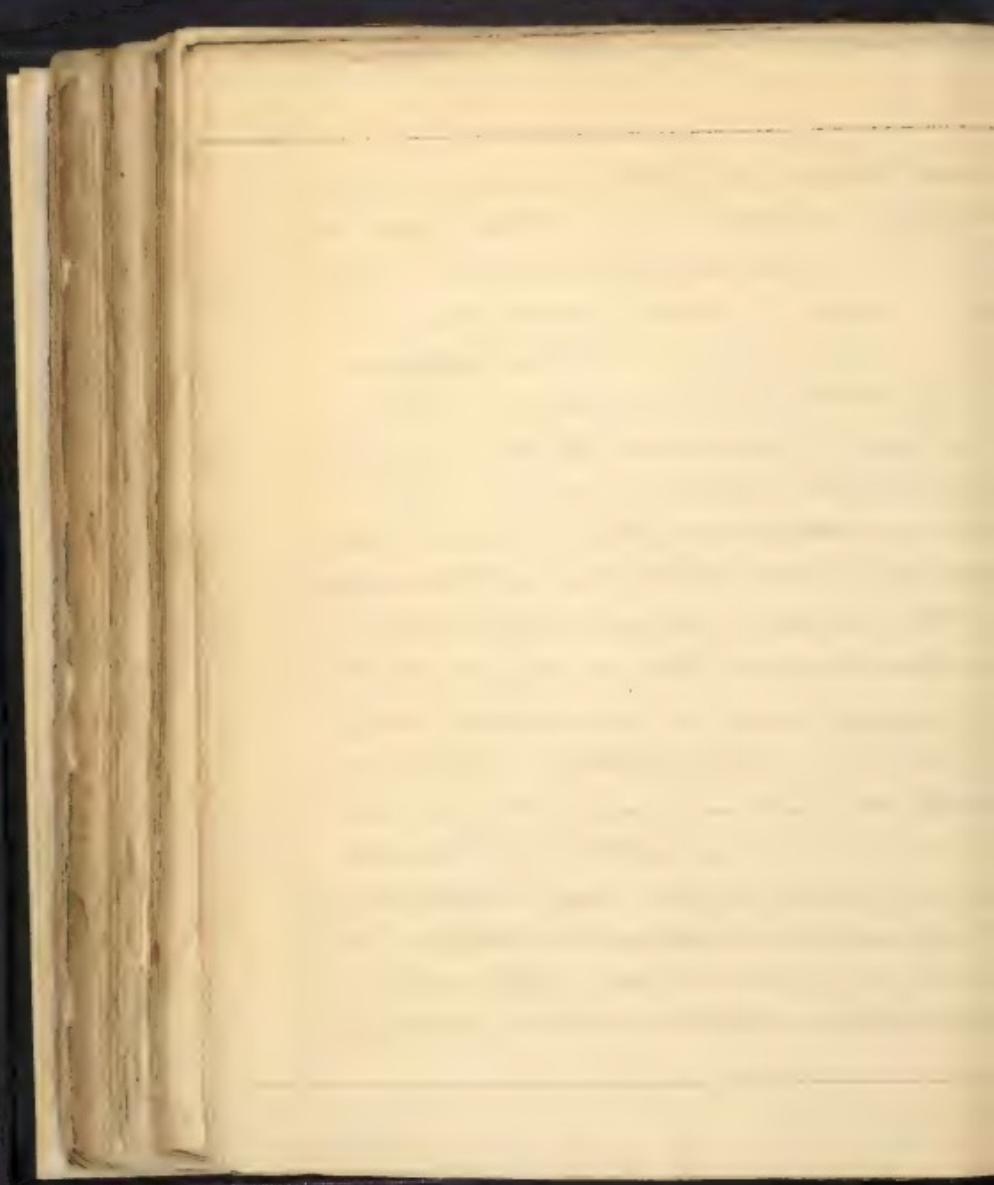
thought he is but a tyro in the study of physic, & that
He professed himself to be an enthusiastic student at
the school of Alzeylopus.

Diagnosis.

The measles are usually usher'd in by alternate chills & heats, which are soon succeeded by an increase of fever attended with great want of heat, thirst, languor and loss of appetite so much so that the very articles of diet which but a few hours before were esteemed the most delicious, now appear to want their usual flavor and are altogether unpalatable - the tongue is white and foul, there is heaviness of the head and drowsiness, oppressed in some cases almost to coma, the mucous membrane of the head and chest are alike affected, the former concreta, the Schneiderian membrane and the delicate membrane of the bronchia; - the eyes, lids are swelled, suffused, watery and mortally sensible to light, there is a copious secretion from the nose, with sneezing; and lastly a hard dry cough supervenes, accompanied with hoarseness, vomiting, or, purging which



arrests the former, pain in the head and limbs and with some degree of dyspnoea. The heat of the skin is great, the pulse becomes hard, small and irregular and the general marks of rigor are not severer than what occur in common cases of catarrh. The efflorescence usually exhibits itself on the fourth day from the occurrence of rigor, but it is sometimes delayed a day or two more. Cases however have occurred where the previous catarrhal symptoms continued for eight days or a fortnight. The eruption first shows itself on the forehead, assuming the appearance of small red spots, resembling flea-bites very much; on the fifth they gradually extend to the neck and breast so they augment and run into each other, and clusters are formed; the spots are scarcely elevated above the surface, and are perceptible only to the touch; and as Dr Willan, who was a most accurate observer of cutaneous diseases, remarked, the spots are usually clustered in a semicircular form. Afterwards, broad patches appear over the body and lower extremities, not



6.

quite so prominent, but of a richer hue than those of the face. The colour of the eruption is generally of a dusky red, very different from the vivid redness of the scarlet fever. During this eruptive stage, the febris and accompanying symptoms never fail to subside completely, but this is by no means frequently reached.

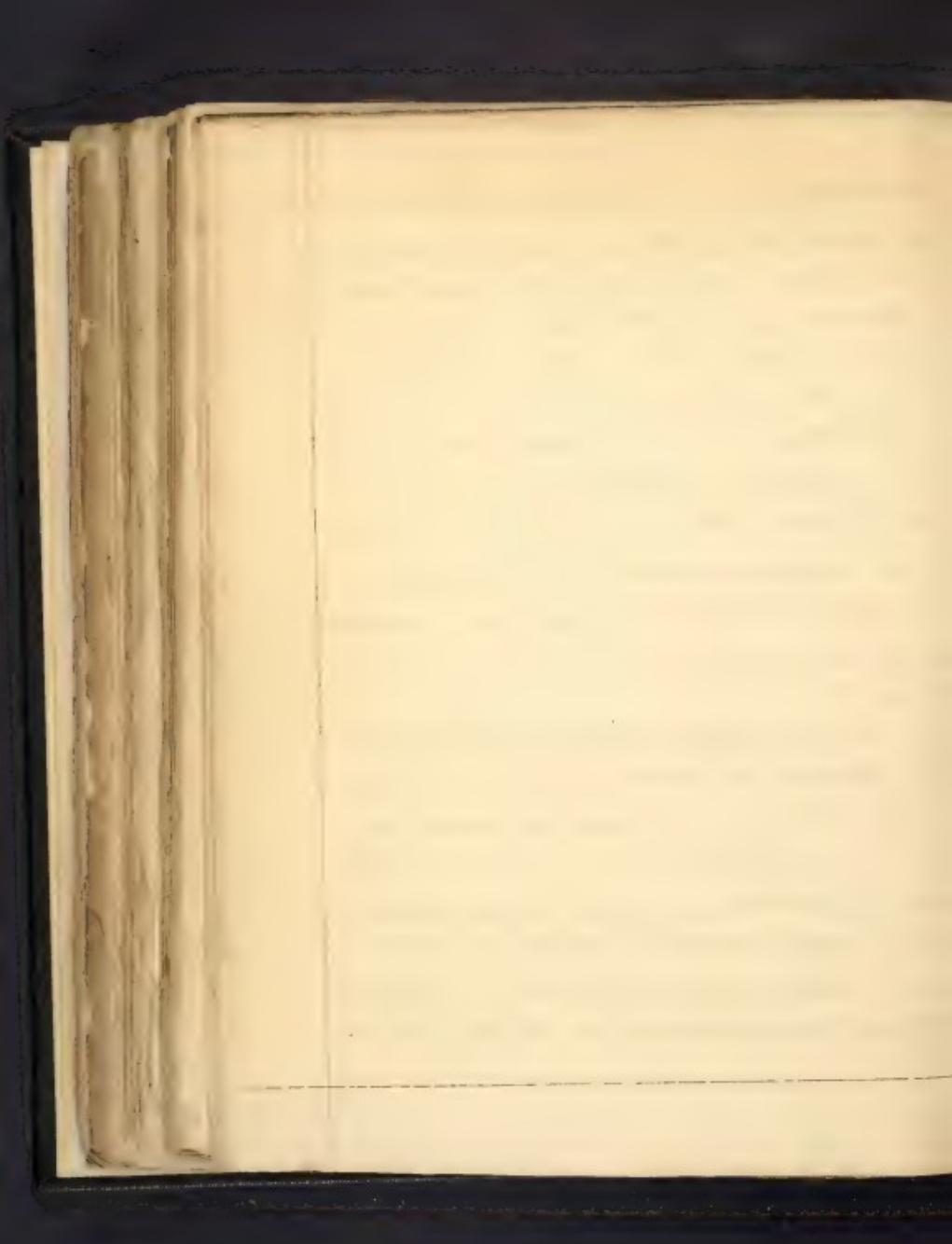
Indeed there are other aggravations, so that within the second and third day of the eruption, it is not uncommon to meet with symptoms of the most acute inflammation. Should a vomit of bilious matter or an emesis occur at this period it usually proves beneficial. On the second day the efflorescence is most lively, and as it declines on the face, it is at its height on the extremities. On the third, the earlier spots die away, and in two more days, the later ones disappear also, leaving a brown skin, parched and, parched desiccation of the skin which usually remains only for a few days. On the tenth, all traces of the eruption are entirely erased, but the other symptoms are not quite so vanishingly, some of them often increase; as the



cough, discharge from the eyes, difficulty of breathing &c all denoting a high febrile excitement, meriting the most urgent attention.

The progress of the disease is as follows & I suppose not very different from what we might expect, that before the asthma, the pleuritic and pulmonary symptoms will prevail for a week or two, & in this stage vigilance must be exercised to observe the early symptoms but more especially of a diarrhoea attended by a copious or a painless stool which however is rendered still more unfavorable.

The premonitory symptoms of the scarlet fever like those of the former, an shivering, sense of cold alternately with heat, thirst and nausea, should however prove it too great degree of gastric uneasiness. In the second or third day, a redness and swelling of the throat comes on, and, in the evening, either is selenium, a discharge of the neck and burning breath. In the night, the

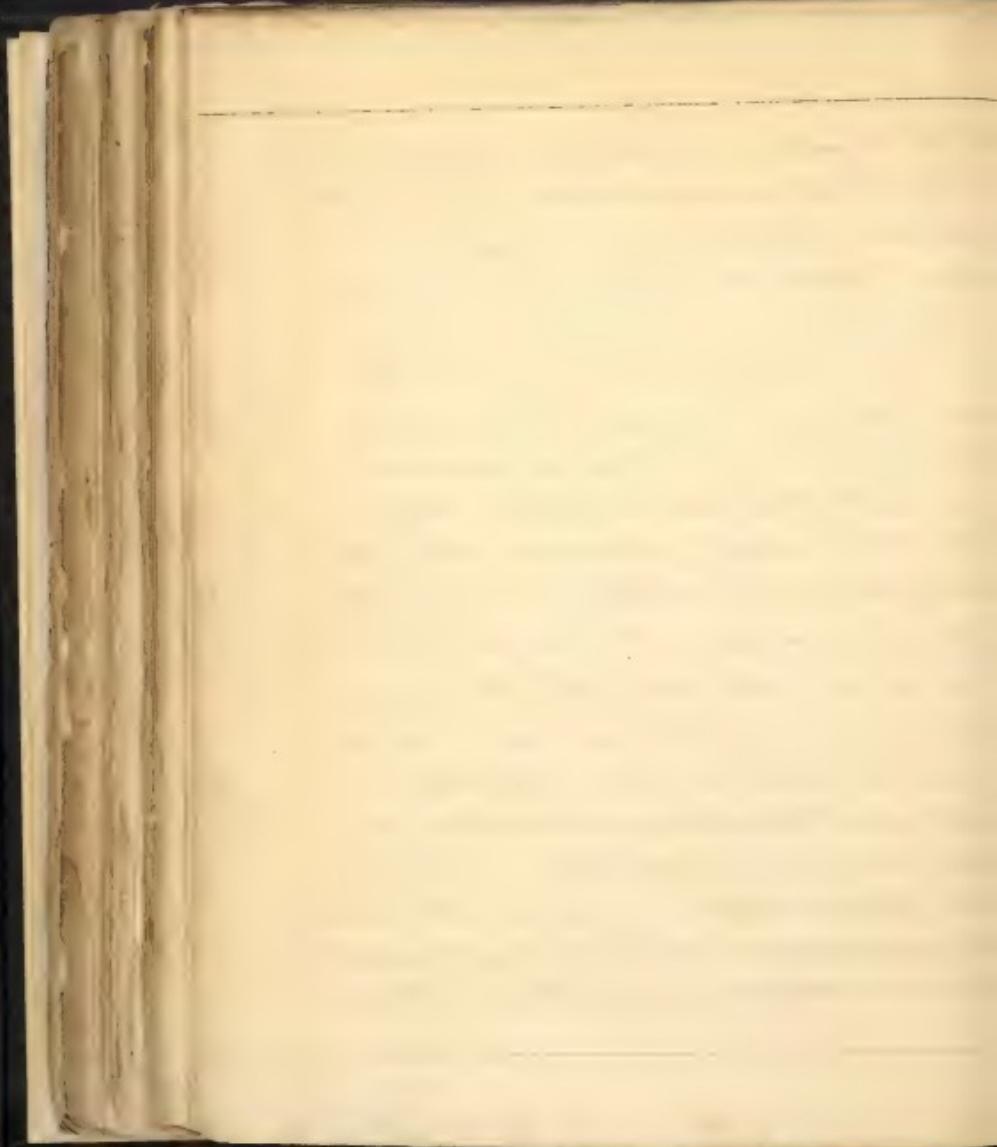


has swelled and is gartered with the neck and rest. The body becomes covered with a florid scum which are red, more copious, broader and of a much more florid colour, but at the same time, not so uniform as those which are common to a cystis, but they are not blotched nor crossed or variegated, which distinguishes them from the cystis. Some times they are scar and recede from the skin diminishing the swelling; besides, the redness becomes dark and uniform as if the skin was suffused with French wine, not diffused itself in varicose nodes, but distributed along the body as the veins do, being most obscured about the loins and the points of the extremities. The inflammation also spreads over the surfaces of the mouth and lungs, and the palpitae of the heart, which are always erected, and their largest points through the white urine which covers it, but it is covered over of the swelling, though sweat disengaged of the extremities. The lungs expel an excessive heat very slight.



At other times there is considerable heat of skin, restlessness and frequency of pulse. The eruption continues about three or four days, after which a brown scaly ^{or} desiccated ^{or} exanthemation of the cuticle ensues.

The features which mark this other form of the fever, such as those of Scarletina, Vesicular and Ulcerous are so permanent and decided, that I need scarcely dwell upon them for a moment. However, I will merely remark that the first symptom of either of the two last, is an uneasiness of the throat, that the voice is rough and difficult; the tonsils and fauces are inflamed and swollen at the lymphatic tonsillitis, which eventually forms superficial ulcerations or speckles; that when these are numerous, they exhale a disgusting odor, while the throat is clogged up with viscid phlegm; besides, that the other inflammatory symptoms are so violent and obstinate, it is utterly



impossible to mistake either of these two varieties.

Having thus accomplished the primary object
of my undertaking, I shall now proceed to the
Treatment of Measles.

This is varied according to the
mildness or violence of the attack. In its most lenient
form Medical advice is never solicited; but when
it assumes a more impinging character, a well graduated
temperature is of the utmost importance. Ventilation
is highly beneficial if conducted properly during
the eruptive fever, for in this case manner that a cold
atmosphere proves hazardous, so does a close, stifled
one become equally, if not more prejudicial
in every variety of this disease. The Physician
should always therefore consult the feelings of his patient
at this point, which generally favor a degree of warmth
such as will promote cutaneous eruption and reject
an excretion of heat such as will augment fever. That
which is most agreeable is within the range of 58° and 60°
of Fahrenheit's scale. There is a very striking sympathy



between the lungs and skin, and between the skin
and bowels; inasmuch that opposite purgation
diminishes too much the flow of blood beneath the sur-
face, and that effect reacts in its turn unfavorably
on the respiratory organs. But on the contrary, a gen-
eral action on the bowels is always beneficial, it restrains
the general excitement, and wards off typical convul-
sions, without the risk of oppressing the heart.

That is verified, when a diarrhoea occurs spontane-
ously at the beginning of the stages of malady,
at which period it is seen to check the progress of
the rash, while the breathing at the same time grows
more oppressed. Such incidents therefore, should
caution Practitioners against instituting any thing
like hysperca Haematu, which might have similar
effects at that stage. However, on the appearance of most
acute instances of this fever, small doses of cold
water and tea oil, of the Lucy bath or Paraguedea with
an infusion of Senna or of Rhubarb & Magnolia, must
be so exhibited as to procure two evacuations in the



twenty-four hours, during the progress of the disease; and when the excitement is somewhat greater, four or five grains of Calomel may be added to the above medicine, that preparation being then more efficient in the abdominal exertions will be found useful in excited states. These simple remedies accompanied with an occasional opiate at bed-time, and a strict antiphlogistic regimen will answer every purpose in a large majority of such cases; and where the heat may be suffi-
ciently dissipated with a typical administration of blood, an emetic may be, with the usual care,
well frequently resorted to the necessity of more vigorous measures. An emetic and diuretic beverage,
such as Lemonade, barley-^{water}, &c. may be gradually
introduced at this period, and may be advantageously
intermittent occasionally, as they tend to keep up an
action on the skin and thereby protract the excretion.

If the fever is high, the cough purifying, the pulse
full and hard, Venesction must be employed, and re-
peated as often as the urgency of the case requires.



the quantity drawn being regulated by the judgment of the Practitioner and, the effects produced.

Should convulsive seizures during the eruption as occasionally happen among children, the most efficient remedies are moderate venesecution, total immersion in the warm bath, Laudanum, an enema of the bowels are constipated, and an emetic if the patient can bear it.

In the whole course of the affection, the bowels should be kept free and open and that rather by the gentle, than the drastic purgatives. In proportion thereto that specific purging is to be deprecated, so is the moderate use of aperients to be commended in the class of cases which have just been considered. And one of the most valuable and correct observations of Hippocrates "that burning fever seldom get a considerable head when the belly is cold" and it is this peculiar advantage of laxatives that they are applicable to all of such affections, whereas purgatives and venesectio are only adopted in the most



irrigated form. To allay cough, barley water flux seed tea, mucilage of gum arabic, should be used; to expectoration, those of this class of remedies which are usually purgative, may be employed, such as comfrey root & small red antimonial wine, ordered by physician now. Not over late mentioned.

Off inflammation attack the pleura during the eruptive fever; it generally spreads to the lungs, so that the father after death will be found harder than natural, from an effusion of lymph into their pulmonary spaces, and thus appearance of the lungs of persons who fall victim to measles, is perhaps more common than after the fatal termination of "scrophula", pneumonia, from cold, or a like ordinary cause.

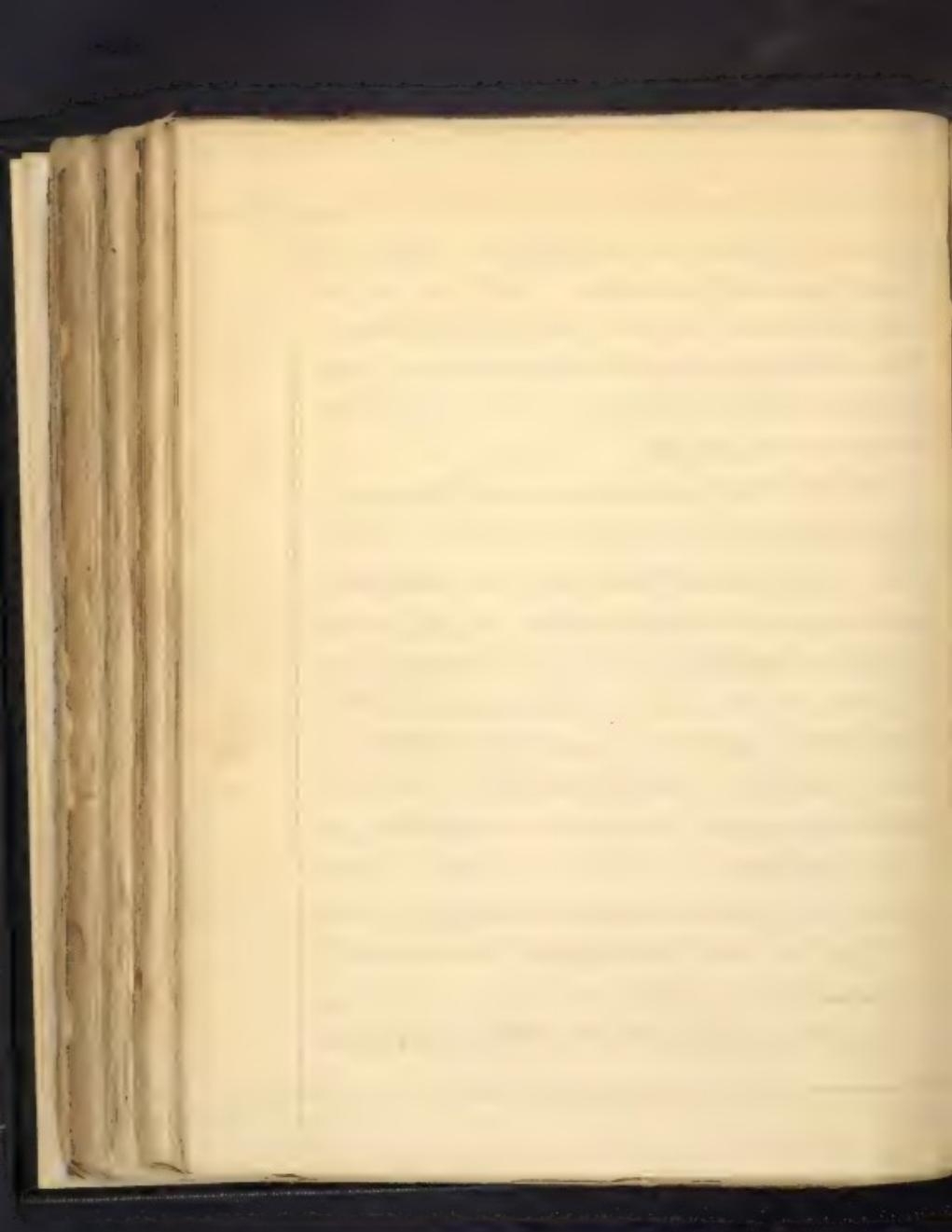
In an exigency of that nature, it is best to combine general and local treatment at this time. I would
by means of venesection, leeches, &c; for this
will well diminish the impetus of the venereal &
syphilitic, which in a great measure maintains
the topical disease, and this salt will exert an



immediate influence on the contiguous portion of the inflamed pleura, by reason of the free communication between it and the integuments of the thorax.

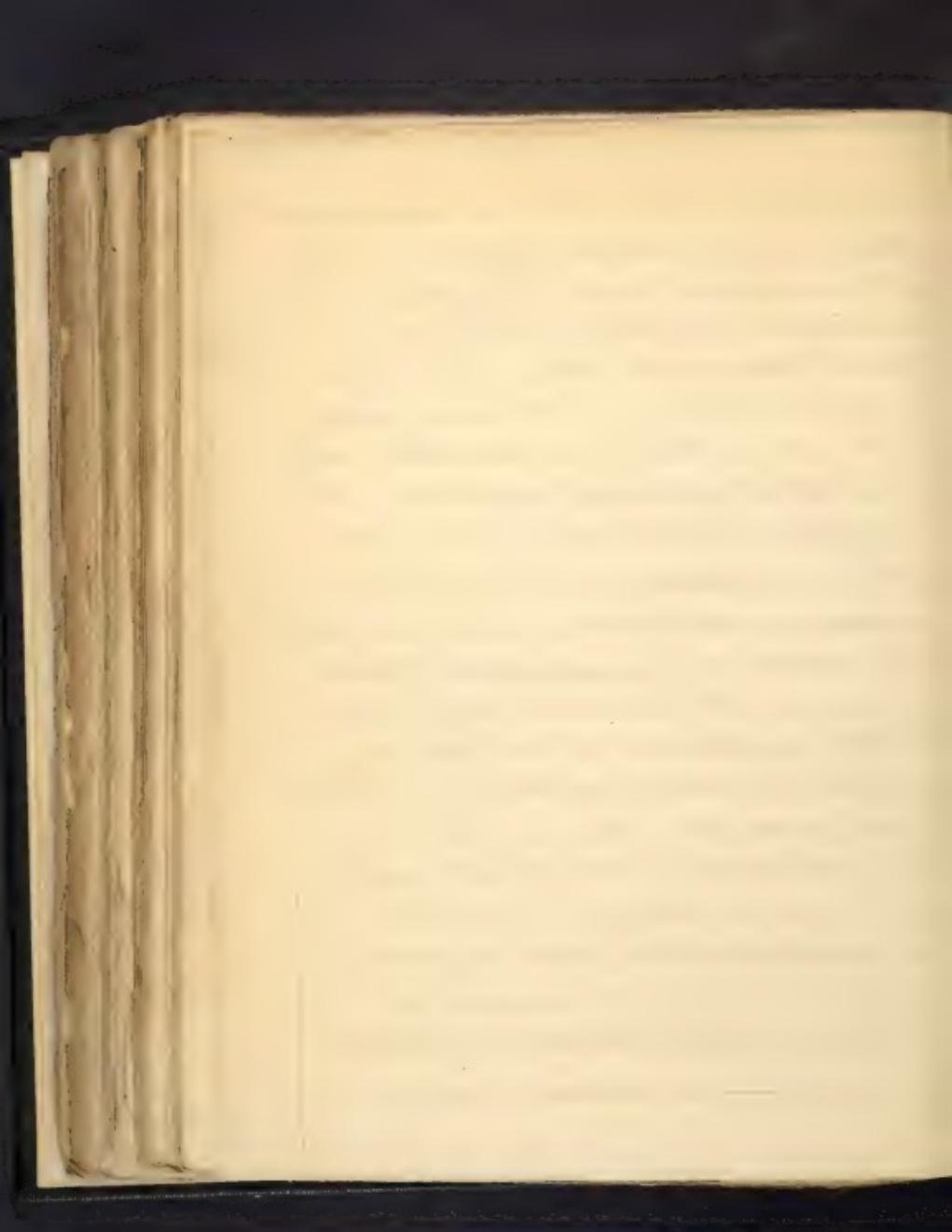
When these measures have been pursued, a blaster may then be applied over the seat of the pain very beneficially.

When the mucous membrane of the trachea itself inflamed or when the bronchial, esophages are loaded with phlegm, from pulmonary, hepatic or pleuritic inflammations, which is easily discerned by the feeble respiration, the lips & a red, bluish hue, and some parts of the skin becoming colder and others hotter than natural; whilst the patient is unable laboriously may be seen to breathe through phlegm lodged in the air cells and the breath observed to have laboriously; - Whenever these symptoms occur with an anxious countenance, and a sickness, or violent pulse, the Practitioner should



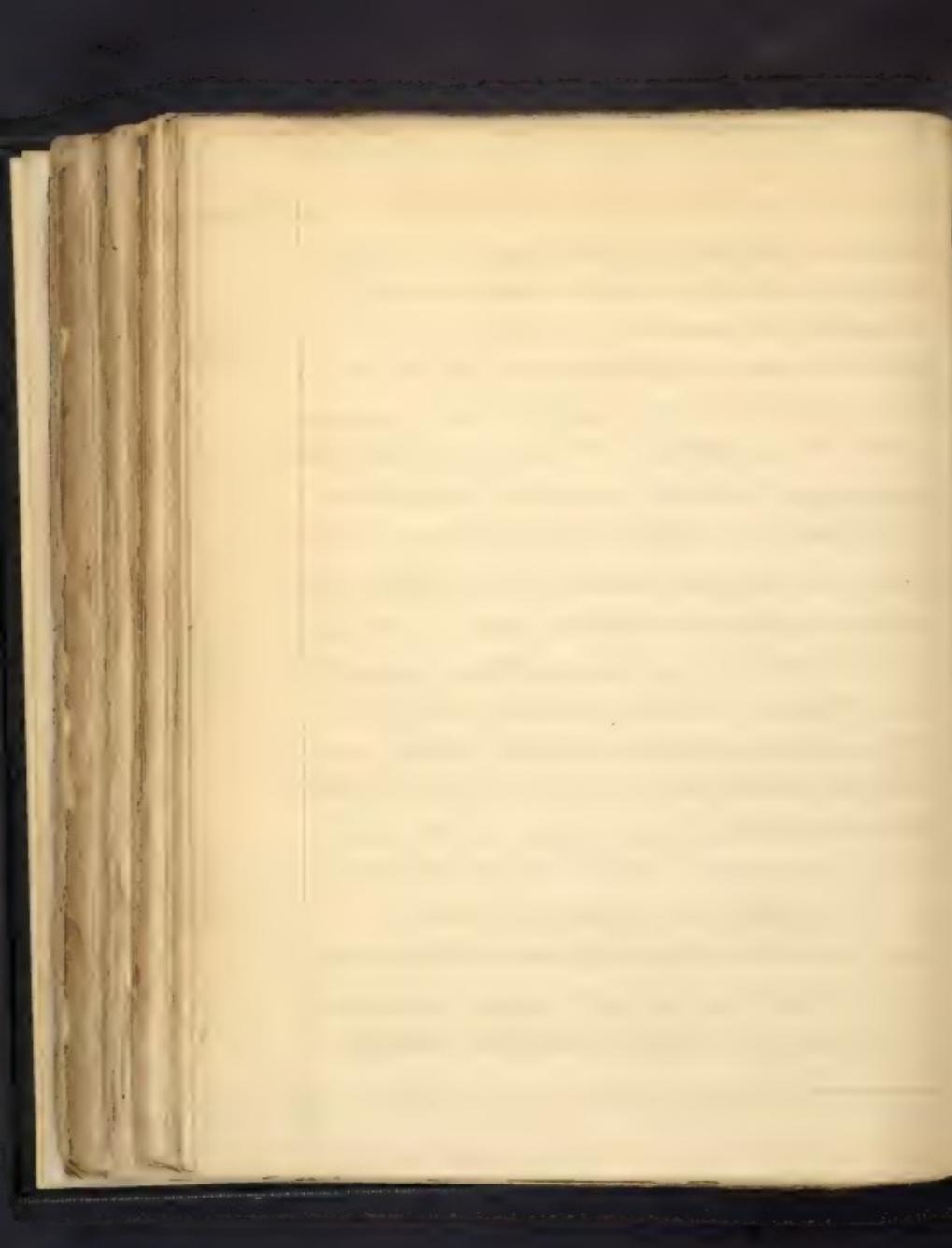
be prompt in his proceedings; - or that it is one of the most alarming & vicious inflammations in the Measles, and I cannot tell you perfectly what this most violent & acute death did on a post mortem examination, as in purulent membranes nothing, it will be found that the mucous membrane of the air passages is the part chiefly implicated in the inflammation, and the bronchia charged with morbid mucus, frequently mixed with pus.

In such examples after the ordinary course of the disease, is the continued use of nauseating & strong antiseptics & cathartics for him we only invite the Physician's status, who often attends the removal of pulmonary concretions by a violent spasm of the larynx, and from the contraction of the air cells; hence, where this condition is greatly aggravated, invalids used to do well, but if it be retained as it is secreted, it not infrequently tends to produce suffocation, & death in children; and it is in such cases in which the



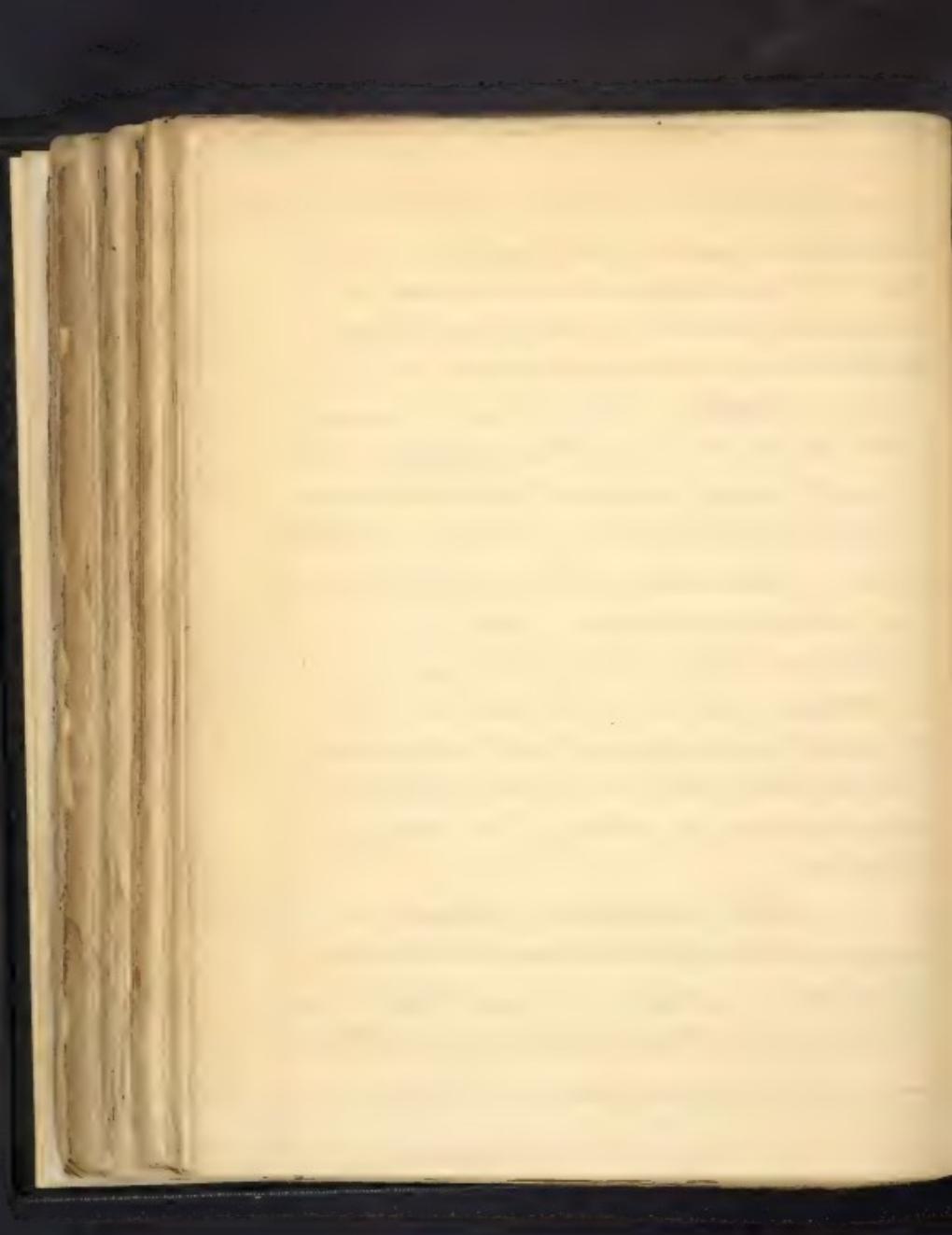
restitution is defective, that the shock of an emetic, by dislodging the phlegm and inducing a change in the action of the heart, may save the lives of some patients. The warm bath strongly impregnated with salt water also be ranked among our best secondary means for such affections, as the wheezing and dyspnoea soon abate after its application. Under these circumstances it sometimes has all the tranquillizing effects of an anodyne, besides relieving the chest by means of a copious diaphoresis. All our efficient agents should be concealed within a short time, and then we should endeavor to soothe the animal irritation of the disease and of this remedial treatment, for if we fail to arrest the inflammation in the breast, by pursuing in others and irritating measures, we shall only contribute to hurried our patient to an untimely grave.

In a premature retrocession of the rash, the tepid salt water bath, together with friction on the surface will generally suffice to cause their redetter-



meat; but if congestion of the lungs, the brain, the liver or the alimentary canal preceded their untimely disappearance, the plan of treatment which has before been directed may be adopted, weighing well the fact, that in urgent instances the execution of this plan must be prompt and decisive. The local inflammation being paramount to every other consideration. The affection of the lungs may ^{begin by} sudden and marked disturbance of their function, and that of the brain, by coma, delirium, twitchings, startings of the lids, a wild infected eye, and if severe, by convulsions, or by the violent contraction of the posterior cervical muscles drawing the head towards the spine; the one, an evidence of congestion, and the other of paroxysms.

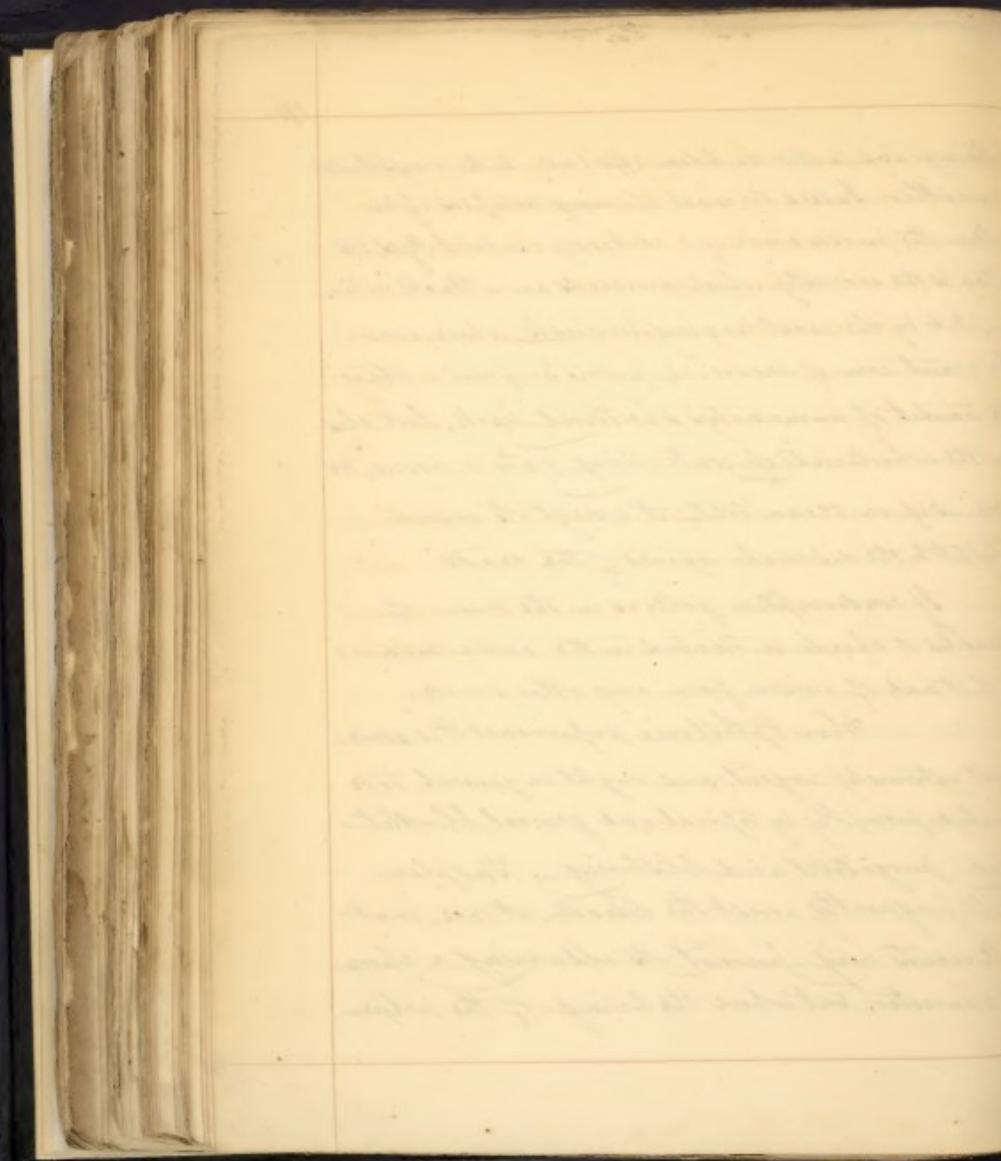
As the consequences of measles are sometimes far more to be apprehended than the primary disease itself, we should advise our Patients to wear flannel, and warn them particularly against cold



bathing and a too sudden exposure to the vicissitudes of weather. Indeed the most alarming relapses often follow the pursuance of a contrary conduct. Yet, too often is the severity which succeeds an attack interrupted by the most raging tempests, when even the giant arm of Medicus proves too frail to stay the tumult of humanity's shattered bark; but, alas! on the whirlwind of contending nature borne, too soon, as if on ocean told, it wings its rapid flight to the dismal regions of the dead.

If consumption follows in the train of measles, it should be treated in the same manner as if it had arisen from any other source.

When ophthalmia supervenes it is sometimes extremely urgent, and ought in general to be treated promptly by topical and general bloodletting, purgations and blistering. This plan will frequently arrest the disease at once, or at all events may prevent its assuming a chronic character, but where the lining of the palpe-



breast is loaded with blood, this under one of each eye
may often be scarified with instruments and great
benefit; - a leech or two perhaps, with cold lotions
afterwards, might answer a better purpose.

If a dislocated shoul'd arise, since it is generally
the result of inflammation of the living membranes of the
joints, I should be treated by moderate venesection as
advised by Sydenham.

However, if a due regard is paid to a rigorous
antiphlogistic regimen, together with the injunctions
hitherto enforced, none of these disagreeable, dangerous
sequels will ever mark an attack of the gout.

